

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

### CHAPTER X. OUR GUEST.

"You've a fine barn here," observed Mr. Manleverer. "Why you might play King John in such a barn as that; and do it well, too. And a nice farm-yard, very nice indeed; with oxen, sheep, horses, pigs, poultry, and all complete. I like a farm-yard; not that I know much about such things. I'm a Londoner; I'm not ashamed of it; London born. The birthplace of Milton and Byron is good enough for Fane Manleverer. Somehow I always associate a farm-yard with a pantomime. I expect to hear the music strike up and to see Joey run on, and all the properties change to something else. I can see there's a good deal to be done with a farm-yard that's never been thought of yet. Great sheep-breeding county this, I observe. I know sheep best in the form of mutton; but even in that form not always so intimately as I could wish. Touchstone, I remember, has some interesting remarks upon sheep-breeding. I played Touchstone once, for my benefit; at Stoke Moggley, I think it was." It was successful altogether. I did not lose more than fifteen and six. Very fair for so undramatic a neighbourhood. Now *there's* a fine pig; if he could only come on squeaking like that, under a clown's arm, what applause he'd get. But I suppose he'll be made into pork or bacon as the case may be, and never know the pleasures of public life. A pig 'born to blush unseen and waste his sweetness'—no, that's not quite the right word. 'And smelt so? Pah!' says Hamlet, and throws down the skull. But with all his faults I feel I could love that pig if he came before me in the form of

ham. Like many human beings, a pig is more dear to us when dead than when alive. For this pig, however—he'll die obscurely, though not without noise perhaps, and be eaten by bumpkins. I beg your pardon, I meant nothing personal by my mention of bumpkins. They make a very good audience, when you can't get a better. You're fond of the play? Youth, like the butterfly, loves the lamps, usually."

I told him that I had never seen a play.

"Never!" he repeated, with a look of pitiful surprise. "But how should you? You're off our line of march here. And the villages are so scattered we could hardly hope for a paying house. But all things must have a beginning. You've seen a player, at any rate, and you might see a worse one, although I'll own, for I'm modest, you might see a better, possibly."

Our visitor had remained a day or two at the Down Farm. His hurt had somewhat inflamed, and he had been urged to postpone his journey. He was not loth to stay, I think. But he perhaps suffered more than he cared to confess. He had a light-hearted jesting way with him, and was inclined to make light of his troubles. No doubt, in such wise, he succeeded in rendering them more endurable. He was in truth an actor, always acting; but his faculty of investing his circumstances and situation with an unreal air had its advantages.

"I shall miss my engagement at Lockport," he said. "But that's no great matter, perhaps. There's never much done at Lockport. A race-week audience. Pit full of jockeys and horse-dealers. Betting men in the boxes. A rabble in the gallery. And very likely, after all, the ghost wouldn't have walked."

"Were they going to play Hamlet?" I asked.

He laughed.

"You've read your Shakespeare, I see. Good boy. But I did not refer to 'buried Denmark.' I meant a ghost of another kind, that should be more material but often is not. It's a way we have of saying that there is 'no treasury;' that our salaries will not be paid to us. Yes, they might play Hamlet," he mused, "even without me. They are capable of it. But I pity Shakespeare! 'Twill be the murder of Gonzago, indeed, with a vengeance!"

He limped about the garden and the farm-yard, leaning upon his stick or upon my shoulder. I found him most amusing, though I failed to understand all he said.

"You make a good audience," he observed sometimes with a laugh. "I should play all the better if I could see you in the pit. It's wonderful how a friendly face helps one on."

And then, as he walked with difficulty—and perhaps in his manner of doing this there was something theatrical—he likened himself now to Belisarius, and now to King Lear. In the latter case I assumed that he had cast me for the part of the Fool. It was all wonderfully new to me. I certainly thought him the most entertaining and attractive person I had ever known.

Kem underrated him: was jealous, I believe, of my preferring his society to hers: and she was quite ill-natured in her observations upon a certain paucity of body linen that characterised his wardrobe. She accused him of wearing a false-front—what was then called a "dicky," and contemptuously viewed as an article of apparel. Mr. Mauleverer made no further allusion to the trunks which he had previously said had been sent on to Lockport before him. I have since come to the conclusion that the trunks had no real existence, and that such property as he possessed he carried with him tied up in the cotton handkerchief. During his stay at the Down Farm he was supplied with linen, carefully aired, from my uncle's store.

Still I found Kem anxious to listen to all our visitor said, never tired of contemplating him, and altogether much entertained by him, though she tried not to seem so. She still cherished doubts as to his social status, and disapproved his admission to the parlour and his reception as a guest. To Reube Mr. Mauleverer was so impenetrable a mystery, that the shepherd, apparently in despair, withdrew his mind, after

awhile, from all consideration of the subject, and sought his sheep as preferable society, on the score of their superior intelligibility. Indeed, by the farm servants generally the actor was pronounced "a queer quist," and there, as they expressed it, "let bide."

By my uncle and my mother Mr. Mauleverer had been besought to stay in simple kindness and good faith. It was sufficient for them that he was hurt and needed rest.

There had been no question of withholding hospitality from Mr. Mauleverer by reason of his profession. The Down Farm was almost without prejudice on the subject of plays and players. Our district was too secluded, and its inhabitants too dispersed, for strolling companies ever to visit us, even on their way to more profitable neighbourhoods. Some vague belief that acting was an "idle calling," no doubt we held—but not very firmly, on account of our want of absolute knowledge and experience on the subject. Probably had choice been possible, my mother and my uncle would both have preferred their guest's following some other profession; but scarcely for a better reason than that in such wise he would have been a more comprehensible person to them. My uncle in times long past had once or twice visited London, and had seen a play or two acted; but of these exhibitions he preserved but faint memories. So, altogether, Mr. Mauleverer's position was somewhat that of a mariner wrecked upon an island of friendly and innocent natives. He was to them as a creature from another planet. They were quite content to bind his wounds, help and welcome him to the utmost of their power, and to persist in hospitable offices so long as he made them no ungenerous return. He was very strange, perplexing, and amazing to them; yet he interested and amused them, in spite of themselves, and so, while he abode with them, was assured of handsome treatment.

To do Mr. Mauleverer justice, he strove his best, I may say he acted his best, to commend himself to the favour of his hosts. He assumed a marvellous polish of manner, as though he were playing a noble lord in some old comedy. He called my mother "Madam," and bowed reverently whenever he addressed her. He listened to her every remark with profound attention. He took a pinch of snuff from my uncle's round box with extraordinary grace; a certain distinction even attended him in the fit of sneezing with which he was subsequently afflicted, not being accustomed, I think, to

real snuff. And then, how different he was to Mr. Bygrave! What a flow of conversation he possessed! The swiftness of its current swept us all along with it. He could talk upon any subject and display interest in everything. Now he was chatting to my mother about her knitting—she was making a warm petticoat for Jim Truckle's wife, to be ready for her by next winter—now he was deep in agricultural mysteries, subsoiling and the rotation of crops, with my uncle. What did it matter that he knew nothing whatever about one subject or the other? It was wonderfully pleasant all the same. And what a fund of anecdote he was master of! He had acquaintance with all the topics of the day, many of them so new, or so recently become old, that we had never even heard of them. He had been in London within the last month, and it was clear knew that great city intimately. And what a choiceness of diction, a richness of voice, and above all what a play of features he possessed! The way in which he sometimes winked at me, in the midst of his most solemn speeches, was quite convulsing, it was so humorous.

It was curious, I have often thought since, how quickly he appreciated the fact that he was dealing with simple but serious people, to whom levity was distasteful and jesting unpleasant, if not unintelligible. He maintained in the parlour a polished gravity of demeanour, smiling occasionally in a dignified, composed way, but never laughing or attempting to provoke laughter. Yet he promptly discerned in me mirthful inclinings, and as we paced the garden or the farm-yard, did not hesitate to appeal frequently to my sense of the comical: strove, indeed, in a very pronounced way to stir my laughter, and certainly succeeded.

And then he read Shakespeare to us; not being specifically invited to undertake that task, nor deliberately proposing it himself, but drifting towards it by mere accident. Some doubt had occurred to him, he said, as to a passage in Hamlet, and did we happen to have a Shakespeare in the house? I produced the volume. He read aloud a few lines, closed the book; reopened it; read from it again; and at last by a gradual process he arrived at favouring us with systematic recitations from the poet. We were all gratified, I think. I was delighted, I know. And I could hear that Kem was listening at the keyhole. Indeed, I opened the door suddenly and discovered her on the door-mat, with the

larger portion of her apron crowded into her mouth, as though by such a proceeding her sense of hearing was somehow intensified. I thought his efforts quite triumphant. Of course, Mr. Bygrave, whether in reading-desk or pulpit, was not to be mentioned in the same breath with him. He was pompous perhaps; his facial movements might have been called grimacing by ill-natured critics; and there was something ventriloquial about his strange and rapid diversity of intonation. Still it was very interesting. He made me start, and my skin change suddenly to "goose-flesh" all over, with a sense of an icicle being slipped down my back, when he introduced the ghost! How sepulchral was his speech! A rush of cold dank air as from a newly opened tomb seemed to fill the room.

I was distressed that my mother and my uncle were not more enthusiastic in their recognition of Mr. Mauleverer's exertions. But they were not given at any time to much fervour of expression. The reader seemed content, and smiled with self-approval, as he dabbed his moist forehead in the pauses of his performance. And certainly by their stillness and their air of attention and surprise, they rendered him a degree of homage; though I remembered that once my uncle had, with much the same expression of face, contemplated a dancing dog exhibiting in Steepleborough market-place. But Mr. Mauleverer seemed satisfied with the effect he had produced. He had possibly suffered now and then, in the course of his career, from listless and unsympathetic auditors.

He continued to cut black shades. My mother thought my uncle's portrait unmistakable. He held hers to be decidedly faithful. Each forbore to discuss the merits of his or her own silhouette, I noticed. And then Mr. Mauleverer gave me my first lessons in drawing.

#### CHAPTER XI. A TENDER PARTING.

SOME taste or disposition for art I was already conscious of possessing; but it had scarcely found outlet or expression, save in certain rude drawings executed with a lump of our native chalk upon a tarred barn-door, or in dim designs scratched upon blotting-paper to beguile the tedium of Latin exercises. Now I obtained a measure of methodical instruction from Mr. Mauleverer, and what was perhaps even more precious, encouragement and applause. He was unused to teaching, he stated; yet he had skill as a master: instructing by

example, which is perhaps the best system of instruction.

I was loud in my admiration of his manifold abilities.

"Yes," he said, complacently, "I can do a good many things. That I am much the better for it I'll not venture to assert. It's no use making a number of small bids for success. The thing's knocked down to the highest bidder, who may make perhaps but one offer. Yes, young gentleman, I can act—fairly; I can paint—decently: portraits, landscapes, history, anything, including scenery. That's what I've been doing lately, thereby having a few more shillings—owed to me. Still upon the whole Fortune has not smiled upon Fane Mauleverer, or smiling, she has slid her rewards into other palms than his, and less deserving perhaps. So you would hint. I am obliged to you. I'll not contradict you. I like to hear hand-claps greet me, even though they may proceed from the village idiot on the back bench of the gallery. Not that I am associating you, my young friend, even in thought, with that unfortunate. Far from it. I count you among the box audience—the front row, if you will. I would only hint my appreciation of applause let it come from what quarter it may. I don't despise the copper coinage because of the existence of silver and gold. Half-pence are of use; so I have found. One can buy many things with them—bread for instance. I have known adversity; I admit it; and found its uses less sweet than they might have been, or than the poet has affirmed them to be. Still I have not despaired. I am not of a desponding nature. I persuade myself that luck may be in store for me, must be, indeed—put out at compound interest as it were. That there is a vast amount of it standing to my credit somewhere, I am fully satisfied. When it becomes due and payable I shall be a sort of millionaire. Meantime my position is much less enviable. 'While the grass grows—the proverb is somewhat musty.' But the world shall hear of Fane Mauleverer yet."

I thought it hard that so clever a man should have undergone misfortune; and I said as much. He patted me on the shoulder, and smiled a gracious recognition of my sympathy.

"The artist must suffer; it is his destiny." I noted that by describing himself as an artist the idea of suffering became almost pleasant to him. "It is the price he pays for his endowments."

He remained with us over one Sunday, I remember, although, on account of his lame limb, he was excused that journey to church over the down, which was invariably accomplished on that day by the household of the farm. I was sorry for his absence from the service for two reasons. I desired his opinion upon the elocutionary efforts of Mr. Bygrave; and I wanted to know what he thought, as an artist, of the white-washed fresco in Purrington Church.

He assumed much gravity and staidness of demeanour on the Sunday, as though anxious to bring himself into harmony with the feelings of his hosts. His talk was of the clergy; and he even referred by name to a bishop. I think he said that he had taught elocution to that spiritual peer. Nothing could have been more exemplary than his speech and bearing.

In the evening, at his own instance, he read aloud a sermon by Blair. His delivery was so spirited that the discourse in question acquired extraordinary animation. Looking over it for myself afterwards, I found it even somewhat dull. Yet from his lips it sounded quite stirring. My mother and uncle, I think, were afflicted by doubts as to whether a sermon ought to be made to seem so lively; whether there was not something unnatural and heterodox in so transforming it. In their experience, perhaps, sermons had been always more or less soporific. But upon this occasion Blair had been most awakening.

I openly expressed regret that our guest did not perennially occupy our pulpit instead of Mr. Bygrave. Mr. Mauleverer deprecated this view of him, and yet was clearly gratified by it.

"The church?" he mused. "As an opportunity for oratory there is much to be said for it. I could have shone, I think, as a preacher. I could have worn lawn sleeves, with credit to myself and to the spectators—I should rather have said, perhaps, my congregation, my flock. Yes, I could have done much more than has ever yet been done, I think, with the part of a bishop. Still, I will own a certain unfitness on my part for the assumption. *Nolo episcopari*. I am opposed to monotony. I love change: change of life, of dress, of scene, of character. You see, I am an actor, an artist. There is a leaven of the vagabond in me. I own to something of the gipsy in my nature. I am now this; now that. Here to-day; there to-morrow. A bishop for a week—and I should weary of the task. My dignity would fall from me



like a worn-out garment; I should be capable of conduct most unworthy of the bench. It is better as it is perhaps; although the present moment does not display my fortunes at their best. No, not the bench for me; but rather the boards. I am at home there; with scope for my versatility. I can paint scenes and exhibit before them in a wide range of characters. My tragedy has been admired, and I have known audiences quite enthusiastic about my comedy. My physical gifts are seen to advantage on the stage; I am usually hailed with applause immediately upon my first appearance—before I have spoken a word. No wonder. You have observed my head of hair?" he asked, suddenly running his fingers through his locks and raising a great crest above his brow—rather as though he were making a hay-cock. "Prodigious is it not? Many have taken it for a wig. A genuine compliment to Nature; who can be more bountiful than art, however, when she tries her best. I am grateful for the boon she has conferred upon me. She has saved me much outlay. I have no need of a wig-box. A comb, pomatum-pot, powder-puff, and curling irons, and I am fitted for any character; in five minutes my head can be made ready for Hamlet or Caleb Quotem. A trifle of powder and I am iron-grey—a stern father, a wealthy banker, or a distinguished nobleman; more powder and a little frizzling with the tongs, and I'm Sir Peter Teazle or Doctor Pangloss; a varnish of pomatum simply, and I'm Romeo, or one of the curled darlings who make love to the heroines of comedy. The feats I have accomplished with my head of hair are unknown, save only to myself and my barber."

There was but one failing that could be charged against Mr. Mauleverer, and even that partook of the nature of a compliment to our hospitality. His admiration for the strong beer of the farm-house was excessive. Often did I note him in the kitchen amazing Kem with his volubility and theatrical manner, and persuading her to fill yet another jug of ale for his private consumption, to beguile the time, as he said, between his meals. He never seemed to be much the worse for his frequent draughts, however; always stopped at a certain stage on this side of intoxication, although he had travelled some way on the road to it. His utterance was always distinct if it became more rapid; and his gestures maintained their gracefulness if they waxed more and more redundant. A rich glow spread over

his fleshy face, and a sort of hectic sparkle illumined his eyes. In the morning I noticed he looked somewhat dull and sodden, and his animation, although still remarkable, was perhaps rather the result of effort.

We kept later hours than usual at the farm during his stay. Often after I had been compelled to retire to rest, I could hear his rich voice still exercised in the parlour. He must have enjoyed a kind of monologue. I often wondered what he could find to say to my uncle.

"He is not a sympathetic auditor," Mr. Mauleverer confessed to me. "I've played to farmers and won their favour. But Mr. Orme is not easily moved. He would perhaps have succeeded as a dramatic critic. He misses all my best points. So long as I can talk mangel-wurzel to him I'm all right. Unfortunately I'm not up in mangel-wurzel. Still I managed to come out rather strong on wool and sheep-washing last night. I was not perfect, I admit; but I contrived to fill it out, very creditably altogether."

Mr. Bygrave met the actor, without, however, being strongly impressed by him. The only result was a dissertation with which he favoured me upon the theatre of the ancients. He was of opinion that there had not been much good acting since the time of Thespis. He held the modern stage very cheaply indeed. Why don't they play *Æschylus*? he demanded. I was unable to answer him.

Mr. Mauleverer did not outstay his welcome. There was no inclination to hurry his departure. At least if such a feeling existed there was no manifestation of it. He was the first to speak of leaving the farm, mentioning his intention of journeying back to Dripford, for it availed not now, he said, for him to proceed to Lockport. The race-week was over, and he judged his engagement to be at an end.

"I must hark back to London," he observed, "and start afresh."

I besought him to stay yet a few days longer. But he shook his head.

"I must jog on," he said. "The rolling or the strolling stone must fulfil its mission. I may not gather moss, but at least I shall not get rusty. I must jog on. I must stand on the pavement once more with the lamp-posts about me. Then I know where I am. Besides, I may not remain idly here; I must be up and about. The stage is my farm; I must cultivate it. May it yield me an abundant harvest."

"You are not happy here?" I asked.

"I am grateful," he said. "Happiness is never where we stand; but always in the distance—on the horizon. We may not reach it; but we needs must travel towards it. And then, the country is pleasant, picturesque, salubrious, I don't doubt it, and its victualling arrangements are most ample; but it sends me to sleep, it numbs me. I gain too much flesh here—I have increased a stone's weight, my waistcoat 'plims,' as your local word has it. I have already a corpulent inclining that may unfit me for the slimmer heroes. It must be checked, by toil, possibly even by privation. Your strong beer offers potent charms; yet must I part from it. Besides, I must put money in my purse. I shall need it; indeed, I have always needed it. Genius is but gold in the ore; one must display and manipulate it to obtain coin and small change for it."

Then I put in execution a plan I had secretly conceived.

"Let me help you, Mr. Mauleverer," I said. I produced my three sovereigns, the gift of Lord Overbury.

"Bless the boy," he exclaimed with a more natural air than was usual with him. "Why how did you come by so much money?" He weighed the coins in his palm and examined them. "Genuine gold as I'm alive." Then he asked suddenly: "You've never stolen them? Pardon me. I am sure you have not. But the sight of so much money is disturbing."

"It's my own—all my own," I said, my face burning as I spoke. And I told him very briefly my adventure at the Dark Tower.

"I would I had been there," he observed. "Lord Overbury?"

"You know him?"

"No. But I have heard his name, in connexion with—I scarce know what at this moment. And he gave you these?"

"Yes, but it's a secret. No one knows it except Kem, and she'll never tell. Kem's always true to me. Please take them. I don't want them, indeed I don't. I'd so much rather that you took them."

"Generous boy!" he said, musingly, looking now at me and now at the money.

"How old are you?"

I told him.

"And you've no father living?"

"No."

He covered his face with his hand. I thought that he was lost in thought, until I detected that he was still observing me

through his fingers. His nose, I recollect, looked rather red from contrast with his diamond ring which was touching it. In the same way the jewel gained new brilliance.

"No," he said at length, throwing back his head and waving his arms in the air. "I'll not rob the young and the orphan. Perish the thought. Tempt me not, Duke. Take back the money, my brave boy."

And he turned from me. I implored him anew; assured him that the money was my own to do what I would with, that he was not robbing me—that it was a cruel word to use. But he would not listen to me. I felt sadly disappointed.

He took leave of my uncle and my mother in the most polite way. In graceful terms he thanked them again and again for the hospitality they had extended to him; entreated my mother to charge him with any commission she might desire to have executed in London, then or at any future time; letters, he said, addressed to him at the Red Bull Tavern, Vinegar-yard, Drury-lane, almost invariably reached him. He promised that he would certainly call to pay his respects should chance ever again bring him into the neighbourhood of Purlington—that if he was ever, indeed, within twenty miles of the Down Farm, he would most certainly visit it, and renew one of the most pleasant friendships—if he might presume to employ the term—he might? he was charmed indeed—that he had ever formed in the whole course of his life.

Then, with his little bundle of clothes tied up in the coloured cotton handkerchief, which Kem had washed and ironed for him—not before it needed that process—and shouldering his rough, knotted walking-stick, he quitted the farm-house, pausing a moment to smile final adieux, and wave his battered white hat to my mother, who stood at the window watching his departure.

"A gratifying exit, skilfully executed," he said with a self-approving smile and a toss of his head as he strode across the elastic down in his thin shoes.

It had been arranged that I should accompany him as far as the high-road to Dripford, so that there might be no danger of his again departing from his path. I confess that I was anxious to see as much of my friend as I possibly could, and was loth to part from him.

"We shall meet again, my young friend, never fear," he said to cheer me, for indeed my depression was very evident. "I know

that we shall—I feel that we shall. The world's but a small place after all; we're for ever running against those we never expected to see again, sometimes, indeed, those we hoped never to see again. I have even encountered, in Lambeth, a landlady I had left in Cornwall. I owed her money, she said. It was possibly true. I do owe money, now and then—often indeed. Trifles that I leave undischarged, now from pure forgetfulness; now, and perhaps more often, from lack of means. We shall meet again. My circumstances may have changed. I may have risen to fame and prosperity. But to you I shall be ever the same. I am without false pride. I shall always remember the friends who showed kindness to me in my hour of need. Here we part. No, not a step further, my young friend; I remember your lady mother's instructions. Here is the high-road stretching out plain and clear before me. Good-bye, and God bless you. Go on with your books. Study assiduously under the exemplary Bygrave. Be a good nephew to your uncle, a son worthy of your mother. And so again: good-bye, and God bless you."

He dabbed his eyes with his handkerchief; but I do not feel sure that he was crying. I know I was.

The white high-road parted us as though it had been a gulf. I began to retrace my steps. By chance I turned to look after him. He had stopped; he was waving his hand to me—beckoning—he had forgotten something; had yet more last words to speak to me. Eagerly I ran to him.

"I have just remembered," he said, "that the coach fare to London from Dripford is of considerable amount; beyond, indeed, the sum I carry with me. A draft upon my bankers in town would probably not be accepted by the coachman. You spoke to me but a little while back of pecuniary assistance. Three sovereigns I think were distinctly mentioned. I declined them, not rudely, I trust, but still decisively. In these cases, however, second thoughts are often best. If you happen now to have about you——"

Delighted I thrust the money into his hand.

"A thousand thanks. I shall never forget your kindness. You will not mention the matter, I am sure? No, of course not. Still some acknowledgment is due to you. Nay, I insist upon it. Take this, my young friend, and once more, bless you and good-bye." And he hurried on his way.

He had given me a crumpled scrap of

paper taken from a greasy pocket-book he carried in the breast of his coat. I scarcely looked at it until he was out of sight. Then I found that upon it was written in rather faded characters, "Mr. Fane Mauleverer's Benefit. Admit —— and party to a Private Box." No date was specified; nor was the name of any theatre mentioned. It was not a document of much worth.

As I re-entered the kitchen Kem said to me: "Old Mrs. Hullock's been over here from Bulborough. She tells me she once lost a main heap of things when the players went through the village, years ago. So I've been counting the tea-spoons. They're all right. Please God the linen may prove the same. But I had a terrible lot of washing out drying on the fuz bushes."

I was much disgusted by her suspicions of my friend Mr. Mauleverer. I vouched for his honesty.

"Maybe," said Kem. "But he was terrible short of shirts."

## THE SPOTS ON THE SUN.

If the Sun were a living Sphinx, who amused himself by proposing enigmas, perplexing the learned while the unlearned give them up in despair, he could not succeed better than he has done of late.\* The last few years have been crowded with solar enigmas.

Spectral analysis has shown that the Sun, though composed of materials in the main part identical with those possessed both by the fixed stars and the Earth, has, nevertheless, something else in him, some unknown substance which we cannot identify. What is this substance which we don't know as yet? Whereabouts are the metallic vapours, of whose existence in him we are assured? Why is he wrapped and swathed in swaddling-clothes of almost pure hydrogen? Why do flames of hydrogen mount with marvellous rapidity to incredible heights all round about him? Are they eruptions of gas from the central mass? Are they dissipated in space? or do they return to the interior to undergo a second expulsion? And the Spots on the Sun—what are they?

Previous to the seventeenth century, astronomers knew nothing about the Spots, and would have rejected any suspicion of their existence as the craziest of heresies.

\* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, vol. ix. p. 529.

They liked an easy time of it, and, with a few exceptions, they had it. What good was there in disturbing established ideas? Within the memory of man, from the most traditional antiquity, has the Sun ever altered his behaviour? Has he not punctually warmed and illumined the world in the very same mode and measure? The variations of the seasons are a different affair; but they, too, are regular in their occurrence, and are explicable by celestial geometry. What would we have more?

On the other hand, earthly flames and fires also light and warm us; but not in the same way as the Sun. Unfortunately, we are obliged to feed those fires and flames. A strike of Welsh miners or London gasmen soon reminds us of our dependence, and of the ephemeral nature of all earthly furnaces; whereas the sun, invariable, inextinguishable, receives no visible fuel from without. He shines, therefore, it was concluded, of himself, in virtue of his own proper essence, which differs completely from that of the objects around us. And as the case is the same with the stars, which shone on Mr. Darwin's early progenitors as they shine on us, it was inferred that they are all, together with the Sun, formed of a special element, far superior to the four vulgar elements with which we are familiarised on earth.

It always requires considerable courage to avow a belief differing from that of one's contemporaries. Sir Thomas Browne piteously pleads, "We shall not, I hope, disparage the resurrection of our Redeemer if we say that the Sun doth not dance on Easter Day. And though we would willingly assent unto any sympathetic exultation, yet cannot conceive therein any more than a tropical expression." It is easy for us, now, to take the "fifth element" and its immutability to be no more than "a tropical expression" for an unknown quantity of unknown conditions; but two hundred and fifty years ago, even the dons of science were obliged to be cautious. The doctrine of an unchangeable firmament was so strong that not even the appearance of a new star in the constellation Serpentarius could shake it. The first serious blow was given by the discovery, about 1611, of Spots on the Sun, through the agency of a revolutionary instrument, the *perspicillum Batavum*, which modern men name telescope.

The study of the Spots by Fabricius, Galileo, and Scheiner, enabled those astronomers to lay the first foundation-stone of

a theory. But their advance was slow; observations of the Sun were dangerous to eyesight. In vain did Kepler contract the opening of his telescope to the size of a pin's head, and place coloured glass between the eye-glass and his eye; even a rapid peep at the solar disc caused a painful dimness of vision which did not immediately pass away. Besides which, the instruments of that day were too weak to allow observers to do more than follow the motions of the spots. But it was soon seen that those spots were part of the Sun himself, turning with him, on an axis, in five or six and twenty days, absolutely as mountains and lakes form part of the Earth, turning with it in four and twenty hours.

The Sun, then, is not immovable. He has a movement of rotation from West to East. He is neither more nor less than a material globe, like our own, brought to, and maintained in, an incandescent state by unknown causes.

Galileo, who did not study long (for very good reasons) the newly-discovered spots on the Sun, believed that they all moved (revolving with the Sun) with exactly the same velocity; and thence concluded that they lie upon, or belong to, the actual surface of the Sun. Scheiner, on the contrary—and this is important to note—maintained that their progress across the Sun's disc is not equal, and therefore that they are not attached or adherent to the Sun itself. In 1613, Kepler wrote, "The spots not only do not move parallel to the ecliptic, but they have not exactly the same velocity. Consequently, they do not belong to the surface of the Sun, although they are not separated from it by a distance perceptible to our vision. For these reasons, and because the spots sometimes appear and sometimes disappear, because they open wider and contract here and there with striking changes of shape, it is manifest that they must be something analogous to the clouds of our Earth, which clouds have a movement of their own, differing more or less from the Earth's rotation."

Modern astronomers had long disagreed respecting the time of the Sun's revolution on his axis. In 1841, the late Monsieur Langier, of the Paris Bureau des Longitudes, undertook a long series of observations of the solar spots. Instead of confining himself to one or two spots of long duration, he determined to observe a great number of spots selected in regions of both the hemispheres as far removed from each other as possible. The idea turned out a happy one. What



struck Langier the most in the course of his researches, was the proof of a fact, more than suspected, as we have seen, by Scheiner, but completely neglected for more than two centuries. The spots have not the same velocity of rotation. Each spot, according to its position, gives a different time of revolution. They have also other proper movements of their own, by which they approach, or recede from, each other. It is, as Langier told his friends, as if each zone of the Sun's photosphere had a special movement of its own.

Now, results like these cannot be explained by inaccuracies of observation. The rotations of the different zones observed by Langier vary from twenty-four to twenty-six days, making a difference of two whole days, whilst the errors to be expected from isolated results furnished by each spot taken singly, scarcely exceed three or four hours. But at that time, Sir W. Herschell's hypothesis of a set of different atmospheres overlying the Sun still retained firm hold of the scientific mind. It was everywhere received and taught as a doctrine about whose truth there could be no question. Langier, doubtless through deference to opinions universally adopted, did not publish his Memoir, but merely gave the principal results.

Nevertheless, these were enough to show that the question of sun-spots contained a mine of unexplored phenomena; as well as that, to obtain possession of novel facts, a great number of spots, selected in the most opposite regions of the solar globe, must be submitted to strict observation. Mr. Carrington did so, day by day, noting their variations of shape, their mode of grouping, and their geographical—or rather their heliographical—distribution. Finally, he desired to continue this patient study during a whole sun-spot period; that is, for eleven years. It sometimes takes a good slice out of the life of a man to advance astronomical knowledge only half a step. But he completely established the close connexion between the proper movements of the spots in longitude (from West to East) and their situation with respect to the Sun's equator. It may be thus enounced: The rotation of the spots is slower in proportion as their latitude is greater; in other words, the further the spots are from the Sun's equator, and, consequently, the nearer they are to his poles, the slower do they revolve round the axis of the Sun.

Monsieur Faye—whose masterly Notice

is our text-book—renders ample justice to Mr. Carrington's *Observations of Solar Spots*, London, 1863, remarking the author's complete independence of any preconceived idea. It is a pure and simple adherence to facts and observations, united with a scrupulous care to put the reader in the way of following out any researches of his own. It gives a complete history of the solar spots during seven years, thereby marking an epoch in science, and serving as a model for all who wish to labour in this direction. Of theories Mr. Carrington is sparing. He seems, however, inclined to adhere to two hypotheses then in vogue—Sir John Herschell's and Dr. Mayer's.

Dr. Mayer's Meteoric Theory of the Sun has already been propounded in these pages.\* Tyndall received it, if not with complete acceptance, at least with great favour. Its upshot is, that the heat of the Sun is maintained by the constant falling into it of meteoric bodies, not through the fuel they supply to combustion, but from the heat developed by the shock—or rather their stoppage—by the conversion of their velocity into heat. The theory is beautifully and ingeniously philosophical, if it were true. Monsieur Faye meets it with the fatal objection that the swarms of meteors which might thus feed the fire, do not fall into it (unless very rarely), but revolve round it, like the comets, escaping after their perihelia, although they may go near enough to singe their wings.

Mayer's theory elbowed its way to the front all the more easily in consequence of the ignorance or indifference of his predecessors, who, very curious to make out, or rather guess, the nature of the Sun's spots, scarcely troubled themselves about the mode of production of his light and heat. Nobody cudgelled his brains to find out the cause of the Sun's mysterious constancy, which had struck all antiquity as a supernatural fact. Speculations on this subject were so rare and barren, that men were content with Wilson's and Herschell's conception of a cold and habitable nucleus capped and surrounded with a thin and shallow photosphere, in which was concentrated the immense and incessant production of light and heat. Mayer's hypothesis had at least the merit of being less repugnant to possibility and common sense.

By measuring the parallax of a few fixed stars, in cases where it has been possible to do so, astronomers have obtained a tole-

\* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, vol. xiii., p. 536

rably precise idea of their enormous distance. By studying the motions of double stars, they have ascertained that those movements are governed by attraction. And, thirdly, by combining those two notions, they have made an approximate estimate of the mass of the stars so wedded together. Now, those masses have always been found comparable in magnitude to that of the Sun; which is a new and certain confirmation of the familiar belief that our Sun is only a star like the others, and that the stars are suns.

But the stars or the suns, whichever we please to call them, are the only heavenly bodies which shine with their own proper light. Planets or satellites, whose mass is imperceptible in comparison with their corresponding sun (in our system at least), do not emit either light or heat of their own in any appreciable quantity. Is there no connexion between these two qualities which are special to suns; namely, the faculty of shining, and the possession of a considerable mass?

On Earth, a small quantity of light and heat is developed by the fall of aerolites, bolides, and shooting-stars into our atmosphere. Those bodies, in the course of their travels in space, meet our globe with a velocity of several miles per second. Their impact produces luminous heat. Not long since, the Times newspaper, under the heading of Stunned by a Meteor, described balls of fire, like large stars, falling into the sea like splendid fireworks. It appeared, the men said, as if something were passing swiftly, and met with the obstruction of the vessel and burst. The decks of the ship were covered with cinders, which crushed under the sailors' feet as they walked.

Why should not the same thing happen to the Sun and the stars? In virtue of their superior mass, they would draw towards them all the loose materials dispersed within their sphere of attraction. The velocity of meteors so falling on them would be enormous, and the light and heat developed would correspond. These latter are calculable, and a sufficient supply of aerolites would suffice to supply the solar radiation.

The idea is excellent. But a theory, said Fontenelle, is like a mouse. It wriggles itself through one hole, and then through another. But if it comes to a hole too small for it, it can get no further, and is caught at once. So may a hypothesis pass the ordeal of several tests; but if one tight fact comes and contradicts it, the hypothesis's progress is hopelessly stopped.

Such seems to be the fate of Mayer's production of light and heat by hammering the Sun with aerolites. As already remarked, his machinery does not in fact come into play. Shooting-stars revolve round the Sun, instead of falling into it. We now know a hundred swarms of meteors which the Earth encounters in her orbit; thousands of them doubtless exist without ever crossing our annual path. But nothing proves that they ever reach the Sun. Nevertheless, whatever becomes of Mayer's solar theory, his views on the dispersion of energy in the universe remain a great acquisition to science.

The question of the solar spots may be briefly stated thus: Since Scheiner's and Galileo's days, plenty of theories have been put forth; but respecting the capital point—whether the spots belong to the photosphere or not—the same uncertainty and contradiction existed in 1865 as in 1613, some affirming that the spots are cavities, others that they are clouds. The only point on which they agreed was the existence, around the Sun, of an enormous atmosphere like our own.

It is now established, if only by a careful examination of Mr. Carrington's observations, that the spots are not clouds, but holes, and holes of no trifling depth, being (although not absolutely invariable) about two thousand two hundred and fifty miles deep. It further comes out that the atmosphere attributed to the Sun has no existence; for, if it did exist, it would refract light to a sensible degree. Father Secchi, one of the warmest partisans of the solar refraction, on attempting to verify it, found it imperceptible. The Sun has no atmosphere, in the accepted meaning of the word. But spectral analysis has told us what really exists instead of it. We now know, and can observe, the somewhat thin stratum of incandescent hydrogen which overlies the photosphere. It resembles anything but an atmosphere, being a confused assemblage of protuberances, or rather flames, darting in all directions with incredible velocity, and assuming forms of a capriciousness which defies all comparison.

Amongst the difficulties attached to the spots, are the slight movements by which they approach or recede from the Sun's equator. On the cloud hypothesis, they did not fail to be attributed to the action of trade-winds. Here, again, the study of facts destroyed the pretended analogy. Those movements are simple oscillations, occurring slowly between very narrow

limits, and not continually progressive movements. Moreover, the movements are not common to all the spots of one and the same zone. So far from that, it often happens that one out of two neighbouring spots will recede slightly from the equator, while the other is approaching it.

Another peculiarity of the spots is as curious as unexpected. It often happens that a spot breaks up, and so gives birth to a group or rather a file of spots. The photosphere, or the inner edge of the penumbra, seems to shoot out a luminous bridge across the spot, and to cut it in two. Soon, the two spots so formed separate from each other and become independent. Now, Mr. Carrington's drawings and measurements show that it is usually the first segment, that which lies most in advance in the direction of the solar rotation, which detaches itself from the other in virtue of a very decided movement. By-and-bye that movement ceases, leaving the new spot to follow the usual behaviour of all the others.

This apparently inexplicable phenomenon is owing to a very simple cause. From Mr. Carrington's valuable series of observations, persevered in for seven long years, we learn that there are transitory spots and durable spots. The one show themselves month after month, when the hemisphere on which they occur presents itself to us; the others last for a few days, and then vanish. Nor are they indifferently situated on the Sun. The durable spots scarcely show themselves elsewhere than between eight and thirty-five degrees of latitude. Those of the equatorial region, and those beyond thirty-five degrees of latitude, never last long. The first give the time of the Sun's rotation with great exactitude, whilst the second would furnish only uncertain results if we were not able to account for the apparent irregularities. But the grand fact is, that the velocity of each spot depends exclusively on its latitude; so much so, that if a spot moves from its mean position, by an oscillation perpendicular to the equator, it instantly acquires the velocity corresponding to the zone which it happens to have entered.

Another important point established by these observations is, that there exists no general movement from the equator to the poles, nor from the poles to the equator; which completely excludes any hypothesis analogous to the oceanic circulation on our globe or to that of our atmosphere. The spots, to which astronomers had assigned a primary importance, are a purely accidental, or at least a secondary phenomenon. They

are something much more simple than Wilson or Sir W. Herschell had imagined. To account for them, we have only to consider the mode of rotation of the photosphere, whose successive and contiguous zones have different velocities, decreasing in proportion as they are further distant from the equator. This difference of velocity gives birth, here and there in the photosphere, to vertical vortexes or whirlpools, exactly similar to those so easily produced in currents of water, particularly where streams of unequal rapidity combine. The cyclones so frequent in our atmosphere have no other origin. Some are of short duration; others last for six or eight terrestrial revolutions, or days, absolutely as on the Sun.

The whirlpools of the photosphere absorb into their funnel the luminous clouds of the brilliant surface. They thus suck in the cooler matters of the outer region, whose lower temperature naturally causes the comparative darkness of the middle of the spots. For, be it well remembered, the blackness of the spots is only relative. Isolated from the photosphere, its brightness is far superior to that of our gas-flames, being perhaps comparable to the dazzling Drummond light. The division of the spots finds its counterpart in the multiplication of little whirlpools or dimples in an eddy of water. The rarity of spots at the equator is explained by the slight difference of velocity in the contiguous zones of that region.

#### SUMMER AND LOVE.

WHEN to my heart the air seems full of song,  
And all the earth is gay with bright-bued flowers  
And sweet with perfumes—in those bounteous hours  
When life is rapture, and my soul is strong,  
As with God's wine of gladness, it is long  
Ere with clear eyes and mind I can discern  
The glory mid the glories, and can learn  
The one surpassing sweetness in the throng.  
But soon I know full well; for when the bliss  
That came and blinded stays with clearer sight  
I see one joy which gone all joys would miss  
Their heart of joyousness: there is one light  
Which 'lightens all things. Let me with a kiss  
Help thee to guess what makes my world so bright.

#### DUBLIN LIFE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

##### I.

THE most graphic newspaper article is tame, compared with the plain word-of-mouth narrative of one who has been an eye-witness of the event in question. The greatest historical masterpiece of painting is comparatively uninteresting, when set side by side with the rudest sketch taken on the spot. And if we wish to really under-

stand history, we must be content to undertake the task, not of the reader of history, but of the historian, and to rummage, as Scott and Macaulay did, among the dusty, yellow, worm-eaten contemporaneous records of the age, and of the country with which we would be acquainted. Few periods in history have been more talked of, more misrepresented both by friends and foes, and less understood, than the last forty years of the Irish history of the past century. The witty, joyous, hospitable, and chivalrous character of all classes of the people, from the highest to the lowest; the pomp and luxury of the aristocracy and gentry; the pluck and spirit with which the Volunteer Association wrenched its political requirements from the powerful and hostile government of England; and the unsullied patriotism, the transcendent eloquence of men like Grattan, Curran, and Plunkett, dazzle the imagination. But, on the other hand, the vices and follies of the country squires and squireens; the abject misery and contemptible knavishness too common among the rural population; the scandalous condition of the metropolis, in which shameful want sat cheek-by-jowl with shameful prodigality; and the unparalleled dishonesty and venality of the main body of politicians, are enough to make every honest thinking man bless himself that these much-vaunted years are over.

Let us play the part of valet to the Irishman of the days of our grandfathers. Let us spend a few hours in the fine libraries of the Dublin King's Inns, or of Trinity College, studying the Irish newspapers from 1763 (when the *Freeman's Journal* was started) to 1800.

Dublin, at this period, was deservedly famous for its printers and publishers. The Edict of Nantes Huguenots had established a splendid business in typography and engraving, many of the best illustrated editions of Addison, Swift, &c., emanating from Dublin presses. As might be expected, the daily journals (Faulkner's, the Saunders's, and the *Freeman*, the two latter of which still survive) are very creditable. Previous to the stamp being imposed, they sold at one penny a number, were the size of ordinary modern newspapers, and were distinctly and correctly printed, with good ink, on good and thick paper. They contained admirable summaries of home and foreign news, and frequently gave the reader telling leading articles, and sensible correspondence.

The first thing that strikes the reader is the extraordinary talent the Irishman of that day had for getting hurt and for hurting himself. The amount of accidental injury he meets with is perfectly astounding. The London list of casualties is, even at the present day, long enough, and scandalous enough, but it pales before the similar details in the Dublin of the eighteenth century. In the first place the Irish aristocracy seem to have had a great fancy for driving two, four, or even six unbroken horses through the narrow streets of Dublin. These equipages were also, as many a correspondent bitterly complains, attended by large and savage dogs, so that if the pedestrian escaped being run over or kicked by the equine quadrupeds, there was a very good chance that their canine comrades would either bite him, or overset him by running between his legs. That noble animal, the pig, was very much abroad also, and frequently overthrew his natural friend, the Irishman. And as sure as horse, dog, or pig overturned a man, the sufferer was dangerously hurt, if not killed.

The streets of the city were blocked with snow in the winter for weeks together. "Several ladies of distinction have broken their limbs during the late frost by attempting to get over the heaps of frozen snow in our leading thoroughfares," says the Hibernian journalist, who generally disdains names, and likes to lump the victims of accidents in columns. A thaw comes, and a mounted trooper gets drowned in the mud while trying to get across Church-street—incredible as this last fact appears, it is stated in black and white, and does not appear to have been subsequently contradicted. The best streets are full of large holes. An unfortunate porter, with a cleve of bottles on his back, falls, an involuntary Curtius, into one of these pitfalls in Suffolk-street, a main thoroughfare between the College and the Parliament House. A passer-by hearing his cries, attempts to rescue him, and falls in too, and we can well believe the reporter when he says that the two wretches, when at length extricated, presented a "spectacle too horrible for words, covered with cuts from the broken glass, and writhing with anguish."

But Paddy's pet accident was to fall into the Liffey. One might almost suppose that he looked upon his picturesque but evil-smelling river as the Hindoo looks on the sacred Ganges, and believed that everlasting happiness was to be procured by immolating himself in its waters. Does a



trooper or a dragoon go down to the river to water his horse? He falls in, and is drowned. Does a merchant go to the quay to see a brig unloaded? Does a sailor go down to Ringsend in a boat? Does a girl take some clothes to the riverside to wash? "Drowned! Drowned!" Shakespeare's exclamation was never so applicable. And if anybody falls in, an impetuous but unreflecting bystander generally jumps in after him or her, apparently forgetting that he himself is not much of a swimmer, and both are, as a matter of course, drowned forthwith. In one case a good-natured gentleman, seeing a girl lamenting that the tide had carried away some sheets she was washing, goes in after them, but, having over-estimated his powers of natation, the man goes the way of the clothes, and is lost for ever. Another gentleman's hat is blown off (no light matter in the days of gold-laced head-coverings); in he goes after it into the fatal waters, and soon exchanges Liffey for Styx. Persons of "disordered minds" (of whom there would seem to be quite a little army going about), are very fond of trying to cool their heated brains in these "waters of Eblana." But the vast majority of the deaths from drowning are dismissed with the contemptuous pleonasm that the deceased was "intoxicated with liquor" at the time. By the way, there is a powerful aroma of whisky about this period in the annals of the Green Isle. Two successive viceroys, my Lords Northington and Rutland, are freely spoken of as notorious sots; indeed, Rutland is well known to have drunk himself to death while still a comparatively young man. And so on, down through every class. Lord Northington gives a fancy ball at the Castle. He being very unpopular at the time, the people, with rare temperance, refuse to drink the barrels of ale set running for them by the lord-lieutenant, which are left to the soldiers, so that the whole guard, horse and foot, were, as "our own correspondent" curtly observes, "when we left, helplessly drunk." A favourite mode of shuffling off this mortal coil is to drink an enormous quantity (sometimes specified as pints, five half-pints, &c.) of spirits, the not unnatural consequence of which is very speedy death. Illicit stills are so numerous and active, that in a year of famine it is bitterly complained that the scarcity of corn is aggravated by the enormous quantity used in private distillation. The volunteers, to their great honour, of

their own accord, undertake the dangerous and invidious task of "still-hunting," and, as they boast, with pardonable pride, seize more illicit whisky in the north of Ireland alone, in one year, than the English government, backed by an army of twelve thousand men, had been able to do in ten years.

If the above sketch should appear exaggerated, I am prepared to assert that among the innumerable papers I have looked over, there is a death by drowning, a murder, and a fatal accident, for every day in the year.

## II.

It has unfortunately always been necessary to keep a large armed force in Ireland. At present the regular military establishment is reinforced by some three thousand constabulary, metropolitan and rural. The police, who look after the order and safety of the capital, are a fine set of men, armed at night with swords, and patrolling the streets in twos. The constabulary are armed with rifles and sword-bayonets; drilled and dressed like riflemen. If, as Mr. Bright complains, this semi-civil army is much more expensive than ordinary troops, it must be remembered that the men are a very superior class to the ordinary material from which soldiers are formed; they must have characters and be men of some education, and any riotous or disorderly conduct on the part of either the city or county police is a thing unheard of.

But in the last century the soldiers had to do the duty, not only of the present garrison, but of the present police establishment as well. When lawlessness reached an intolerable point, even in Dublin, the only resource was to send for the soldiers. The British army was perhaps never in a more discreditable condition than in the interval between Culloden and the rise of Wellington. Hogarth's *March to Finchley* shows us the style of discipline kept up in the ranks, Swift and Fielding present very pretty pictures of the sort of officers who too often during the last century disgraced the British uniform. Junius indignantly declares that a whole army had been allowed to go to ruin in Ireland, and General Cornwallis, so late as 1798, complains that the army under his care was more dangerous to friends than to enemies.

Let us choose from a monotonously shameful list of military scandals, ranging from petty but galling insults to serious crimes, a couple of signal ones.

February the 23rd, 1784 (Monday). "On

Saturday last a soldier of this (Dublin) garrison, in daylight, was secured in an attempt to commit a robbery at Island Bridge. When the report reached the barracks, about five hundred men from the different regiments, horse and foot, on duty there, mustered and proceeded with hatchets, crow's, pickaxes, &c., to rescue the prisoner. Not content with giving him his liberty, they commenced a joint attack on the inhabitants of that quarter. In a very short time they wounded four people, so that their lives are despaired of, tore fourteen houses almost to the ground, and plundered the people of whatever property was in their possession."

August the 4th, 1784. "On Monday night a number of field officers, Lord Harrington, Colonel St. George, Colonel St. Leger, Colonel White, Colonel Cradock, Mr. Freemantle, and two others, in a state of drunken insanity, went into a shop on the quay belonging to a Mr. Flattery, a volunteer, and proceeded to grossly insult his wife. She boxed one of the officer's ears. He knocked her down. Flattery came out, and the officers, all seven, set upon him. A Mr. Moffat, who was passing by, came to his assistance. Colonel St. Leger fired a loaded pistol at him, but without effect. Flattery went for his musket, but was persuaded, on a parley, to give it up. The officers immediately broke it and flung it into the river. All seven then set on him with drawn swords. The guard at the National Bank, hearing of this scuffle, hurried down, headed by their subalterns. Lord Harrington, when they arrived, ordered them to charge the crowd, which had by this time assembled, with fixed bayonets, which, however, was not done. Mr. Sheriff Smith, who had by this time hastened to the spot, ran up to the main-guard for a force to suppress the riot. The officer on duty there told him that the guard had already gone, without a magistrate's order, to rescue their officers. At length the sheriff collected all the soldiers he could get, four or five in number, and on going back met the main-guard with drawn swords, headed by an officer who was extremely drunk. He stopped them. The two gentlemen with him were violently struck. He would have been so also, but that a cry was raised that he was the sheriff. A party of volunteers, who were supping in a neighbouring tavern, on hearing what had happened, hurried down, and on the way were joined by great numbers of their comrades. Fortunately when they arrived the soldiers

were withdrawing from the ground. The officers lost two swords and a laced hat, which are in the possession of Sheriff Smith."

Before the night is over the mob seize Mr. Freemantle, and are with difficulty prevented from throwing him into the Liffey.

Next day affidavits are sworn against all seven officers, three of whom obtain bail.

Some papers in the interest of the Castle bring forward, in palliation of the whole affair, two not over-respectable pleas: first, that the gentlemen were all excessively drunk; and, secondly, that Flattery's house was one of no very high character.

The Duke of Rutland (lord-lieutenant) then sends his compliments to Flattery, and hopes that he will come to the Castle to talk the matter over, as he (Flattery) suggested in his letter. But Flattery quietly writes back to say that he never wrote any such letter, and declines to be interviewed at all.

The end of the matter is, that after the form of a military inquiry, the officers, to prevent the matter coming before a jury, pay Mrs. Flattery five hundred pounds, her husband three hundred and fifty, Moffat one hundred pounds, and a "penny boy," whatever sort of an official that may be, fifty pounds, making one thousand pounds in all.

The above-mentioned sacking of the houses at Island Bridge is followed by a horrible form of reprisal, namely, the houghing or ham-stringing of soldiers by the people, generally by the butchers (ham-stringing we may mention, for the benefit of the uninitiated, is a process which deprives the man on whom it is inflicted of the power of using his legs for the rest of his life). General Luttrell brings a bill into the Irish Parliament to grant a pension of twenty pounds a year to every soldier houghed, the money to be levied on the district where the crime was committed. He complains with much indignation that many of his best men had been disabled for life by this hideous process, and mentions that one officer had told his regiment that he would flog every man in it the next time one of their comrades was houghed, if they did not the next day bring him (the colonel) the head of a butcher!

On the part of the civilians the astounding assertion is made that the military were in the habit of houghing themselves, so that they should be either apparently or actually disabled, and so entitled to the pension. It appears that two men at least had this strange offence brought home to them; one

received six hundred lashes for it as soon as he got out of hospital. Another (whose exact punishment is not mentioned) is detected by the acuteness of his sergeant, who finds the man's own mess-knife within twenty yards of the spot where he was taken up maimed and bleeding. These stories are almost incredible, but seem perfectly well authenticated, and severe self-mutilation, such as the cutting off of the fingers on one hand, or putting one eye out, to avoid service, has in all ages been a not unfrequent military offence. An officer, now living, told the present writer that he was with his regiment, early in the present century, when they were marching from Cork to Cove, now Queenstown, to embark for the West Indies. One of the finest young men in the ranks suddenly stepped aside to where an axe was lying, which had been used for chopping wood by the roadside. He deliberately cut off three of his fingers, to escape a few years' service abroad. That the crime exists among soldiers is undeniable, though complete self-disabling for life for the sake of twenty pounds a year does seem a very motiveless act. But in our old Dublin records, houghed many soldiers are, whether by themselves or by the butchers. The officers of the garrison give a performance at the theatre to which an eccentric gentleman of the name of Handy Pemberton, famous for writing inflammatory letters to the Dublin papers, repairs. His object, as he tells us himself, was to "contribute his mite for the relief of men who had been for life rendered incapable of injuring him or any of his fellow-citizens." In this mixed spirit of triumph and charity he harangues the guard which he finds at the theatre door, informing them that they were sent there to murder the people, that if they would mutiny or desert, the people would aid them, but if they did not, the popular spirit against them was such that they must never expect the practice of houghing to cease. Pemberton seems much surprised and not a little aggrieved to find that the result of this truly conciliatory speech is a refusal to permit him to enter. The soldiers, however, do not appear to have offered him any violence. Pemberton, having to appear in court afterwards for some incendiary letter, is contemptuously told by Lord Earlsfort (afterwards first Earl of Clonmel) that he is insane, and it certainly looks rather like it. Be that as it may, he writes tremendous letters to the *Volunteers' Journal* at least once a week, and that his

presence is very undesirable when any disturbance is to be apprehended is shown by the following circumstance. The Smock-alley Theatre had been closed for some time, so long indeed that the papers sarcastically surmise that the Duke of Rutland pays the manager three hundred pounds a night to keep it shut, as were it open he would be expected to go there, and knew that his appearance would be the signal for an outburst of popular indignation. It is opened at length, and sure enough when his excellency steps into the viceregal box there is a terrific row, and the military immediately seize Handy Pemberton, Esquire, who is sitting in a box near the lord-lieutenant (quiet indeed as yet, but doubtless meditating a slight "harangue" presently), and bundle him out.

This has not been a cheerful chapter. As a relief after these details of ruffianism, we will give the reader the following smart little song, in which the style of Maginn has been happily anticipated by some reader of the *Volunteers' Journal*, in an hour not devoted to politics:

Come, jocund friends, a bottle bring,  
And push about the jorum;  
We'll talk, and laugh, and quaff, and sing,  
Nunc suavius amorum.

Whilst we are in a merry mood,  
Come sit down ad bibendum,  
And if dull care should dare intrude,  
We'll to the devil send him.

A moping elf I can't endure,  
While I have ready rhino;  
And all life's pleasures centre sure  
In *venere ac vino*.

Be merry, then, my friends, I pray,  
And pass your time in joco,  
For it is pleasant, as they say,  
*Desipere in loco*.

He that loves not a young lass  
Is sure an arrant stultus,  
And he that will not take a glass  
Deserves to be sepultus.

Pleasure, music, love, and wine,  
*Res valde sunt jucundæ*,  
And pretty maidens look divine,  
Provided ut sunt mundæ.

I hate a snarling, surly fool,  
*Qui latrat sicut canis*,  
Who mopes and ever lives by rule,  
Drinks water and eats panis.

Give me the man that's always free,  
*Qui finit molli mero*,  
The cares of life, whate'er they be,  
Whose motto still is *Spero*.

Death will turn us soon from hence,  
*Nigerrimas ad sedes*,  
And all our lands, and all our pence,  
Ditabant tunc heredes.

Why should we, then, forbear to sport?  
*Dum vivimus vivamus*,  
And when the Fates shall cut us short,  
*Contenti abeamus*.

## III.

WHEN we find that there were during the last century more men executed in England and Ireland (not including Scotland) in one year than in the whole of the rest of Europe in four; when we find that by no means the smaller portion of these victims to justice was contributed by Ireland, we are not surprised to find even Irish papers admitting that, for murder and robbery, "our little kingdom exceeds any country in Europe." Among the causes of this terrible state of things may be mentioned the extreme misery of the people; the reckless and improvident habits of the young men of the day, which often drove the son of a squireen, or even a squire, to take to the road; and the facilities which the better dressed class of thieves had for introducing themselves into private houses as the favoured lovers of the servant maids. To all these must be added not only the inefficiency, but the connivance and even assistance of the watchmen, who, it was stated by more than one robber on the scaffold, often not only stood by inactive while burglaries were being committed, but even lent the robbers the candles from their lanterns. The plundered not unfrequently, from a mistaken spirit of lenity, let robbers escape, or declined to prosecute them when taken. Nor can we wonder at a kind-hearted man taking this course, when we reflect what earthly hells the Irish prisons were, and at the monstrous state of the law, which virtually provided no punishment between that for an ordinary petty larceny and the gallows.

This last national institution was employed in a way that clearly showed that the authorities were of opinion that "a row of gentlemen suspended would illuminate mankind." The papers lament that "no more execrating punishment can be devised than death." And certainly the grim monarch seemed to have well-nigh lost all his terrors for the Irish criminal. Spenser tells us that the nation were "very great scorers of death." He meant the glorious death of the battle-field. It appears to have been equally true of the ignominious death of the scaffold.

A young gentleman of the name of Ennis murders his father, and attempts to do the same to his mother, only succeeding, however, in mutilating her frightfully. How does he prepare himself for a sentence which he surely can have had no hope of evading? The young villain, when brought up for trial, is so drunk that he cannot

stand upright in the dock! His execution, for he was, one is glad to think, duly delivered up to the executioner—is the scene of another tragedy. An elevation, on which a number of spectators are stationed, gives way, and many of them are seriously injured, some fatally.

Another time a boy—almost a child—is hanged for robbery. The Irish press informs us, that though a yet younger boy was once executed in England for murder, this is the youngest that ever suffered in any of the three kingdoms for robbery.

Again, we find a father, mother, son, and daughter, all hanged together in Dublin, in 1785, for robbing a bleaching-ground at Kilmainham. The Freeman says this is an unexampled case. Let us hope so.

One great cause of the insecurity of the capital was the want of light at night; even in the most central thoroughfares four or five lamps were considered sufficient to illuminate a long street. And such lamps! The wick, we are told, was ingeniously contracted into the smallest possible space, in order to save oil, which economical object was also furthered by only putting in enough oil to burn till two in the morning, or even sometimes only till eleven at night. "The glimmer of the oil only shows to more advantage the dirt on the glass."

All this "darkness visible" was of course due to jobbery. For we are not to suppose that because the citizens of Dublin did not enjoy the advantages of police or lighting, that they also enjoyed immunity from taxes for police and lighting. By no means; the rates levied for both purposes were enormous.

This economy of light extended even to the Parliament. From the ceiling of the great chamber of the Irish House of Commons hung a splendid chandelier, now to be seen suspended in the Examination Hall of Trinity College. This was of course supposed to be always kept lighted during debates and business. And we have unanimous testimony that the effect of the chamber so lighted was fine in the extreme. But there were very few opportunities afforded of witnessing this effect. As a general rule, we are assured by the Freeman (then a government organ), a couple of candles at the clerk's table, and one at the entrance of each of the corridors, was considered, on ordinary occasions, sufficient illumination.

Talking of light. Did the reader ever hear of "philosophic tapers?" Most likely not. Yet the name is only a sounding title for an early form of lucifer match. "Philo-



sophic tapers are for affording light on all occasions without flint and steel. Twelve of them may conveniently be carried in a tooth-pick case, being in glass tubes hermetically sealed, so that they will last for any period." In fact, they were some preparation of phosphorus—probably like the machines for producing "instantaneous light," described years afterwards by Theodore Hook, with which you generally "burnt your fingers, spoiled all your clothes, and set fire to the whole apparatus, without producing the light you required."

While the prevalence of robbery, murder, &c., in England was commonly attributed to the recent disbanding of regiments in that country, the Freeman calls attention to the fact that, in spite of all complaints about the military in Ireland, only one soldier had been capitally convicted there for a considerable time past. I shall take leave of the reader for the present with two incidents, in both of which I think his sympathy will be with the soldier.

First: A soldier is brought in with his tongue cut out. Though he expressed by signs that he knew who had done the crime, and the motive of it, being unable to write he cannot communicate his knowledge to those about him.

Again: "A poor soldier the other day walking quietly down Dorset-street with his bayonet under his arm, it was snatched from him by a villain who made off. The soldier pursued him, but the robber outran him. On seeing this the soldier sat down and began to cry. On being reproached for his weakness he shook his head and said, 'Oh! there is cause for tears in five hundred lashes.'"

It was undoubtedly rather a "spooky" thing of the soldier to let his weapon be snatched from him. By the way, what was he doing with his bayonet "under his arm"? But who can help pitying the poor wretch, possibly a mere lad, crying with utter horror at the hideous punishment in store for him when he got back to barracks? What sort of absolute starvation can have ever induced a man to enlist in those days, when the soldier was, in Henry Fielding's words, "The only slave in a free country; liable to frightful punishments for crimes which no civil tribunal recognises?"

#### IV.

CAN any of our readers give any information as to either of the under-mentioned antiquarian discoveries?

"Cashel, October 4th, 1783.

"Some time ago a man dreamt that if

he would go to such a part of the Rock of Cashel he would find a treasure. Accordingly, as directed by his vision, he went, and after digging with a crow, for a considerable time, a stone gave way and showed a little cave, neatly plastered about with stucco-work. In the midst of the cave was a small white marble pedestal, and on it a copper box of curious workmanship, locked, on the corner of which lay a key. The man, expecting immense riches, opened the box, which only contained a book covered with copper, and riveted over with five small rivets, which they were obliged to file off in order to open the book; it was found to be written in the year 491, which was plainly engraved on the corner. The leaves are vellum, the writing neat and plain, but such uncommon characters as no person can make out. They are neither Hebrew, Dutch, Greek, Irish, nor shorthand, nor anything intelligible. In the midst of two pages of this wonderful book was written, quite plain, 1767. At the latter part of the book there seemed to be verses. The sentences seemed correctly stopped and ended, and the catch words at the end of each page. We understand the book is to be presented to the library of Trinity College, Dublin."

The episode of the prophetic vision is obviously only put in by way of rider, but one would like to know what became of the mysterious volume.

Again:

Dublin Freeman, January the 12th, 1784. (Copied from the St. James's Chronicle.) Colonel Simeon Thomson, County Kerry (Ireland), to Mr. George Barry Douglas, late of Fowey, in Cornwall, but now of London:

"Last Friday I ordered two men to go to the bottom of a well, which I was sinking at a little shooting-place I call 'Do-as-you-please.' It was dug about sixty feet, but no water appeared. I was resolved, however, to go on as far as I could penetrate, until a spring was found. We dug accordingly forty-eight feet further, when something like vapour coming up, we drew up the men and desisted about an hour. When the smoke ceased the two men again descended and penetrated about three feet more. They found on the north-east a hollow way, covered over in a very curious manner with sticks and clay. They had the courage to enter, for there was room sufficient for a man to walk almost upright. They proceeded for about ten yards when they heard a noise, something like the chattering of a flock of jays. This frightened

them so much that they returned, and we drew them up. I then descended with my brother Stephen, and we went through this subterranean passage into a large space. We found a most curious stone coffin, of an enormous size. With some difficulty we got off the lid, and saw a human form, twelve feet eleven inches and three quarters long, all but the head and neck tightly swathed in a pitched skin of a large animal. On touching this with my finger it fell into a kind of whitish ashes, and separated near the sternum. The rest remained firm. We returned in amazement, got up in the bucket, and sent the men down. The entrance was widened, so as to admit seven people, and thus, by the assistance of pulleys, &c., raised the coffin and got it up. The skin in which it was wrapped became by degrees from a black to a white colour. We opened it, and the body and arms of a woman appeared quite perfect and sound. On the thumb of the right hand was a very curious cornelian in the form of a ring, and on it, as well as on the lid of the coffin, were these ciphers, o.o.o.l.o.x.x.x. We then put the body in spirits of wine, and intend to send it to Dublin as a present to the University. We could never discover, nor can we form any conjecture, from what cause the noise which the men heard arose, except it was what their fears created. There are many traditional stories of giants in this part of Ireland. This discovery makes them all facts among the common people, who are ascending and descending the well from sunrise to sunset every day."

#### FUNERAL RITES IN CHINA.

THE funeral ceremonies of the Flowery Land differ so materially from our own, and are so little understood in this country, that the following description of the manner in which they are conducted may prove acceptable to the reader.

It may be well to mention that white, not black, is the mourning colour in China, and that mourners wear white clothes, white girdles, white shoes, and even braid white cotton into their queues or pigtails.

The Chinese coffin is generally very solid in its construction, and is broader and deeper at the head than at the foot, sloping straight from one end to the other; the lid is not flat, but raised all down the centre; the seams are always well caulked, and the whole is carefully oiled several times, and finally covered with a black

varnish. Well-to-do people repeat these processes once a week for a long period. A common price to pay for a good, ordinarily strong coffin is from two to three pounds, but the price varies according to the nature of the material employed and its ornamentation, and we have heard of fifty and even a hundred times as much as this sum having been paid for a single coffin. Of course, among the very poor classes a much cheaper and slighter one is used, though even they do their utmost to bury their dead in such coffins as we have described. The charitable societies for rescuing life, which exist at nearly all towns on the sea coast and on the large rivers, provide coffins gratis, when their boats bring in dead bodies, but they are made very slightly, and of the commonest wood.

On the death of a father, slips of mourning (that is, white) paper are affixed to each side of the door of the house, and in the higher ranks a board is exhibited there, giving the name, age, dignities, &c., of the departed one. Notice of the death is at once sent to the descendants of the deceased, who all forthwith assemble at the house, and range themselves on the floor round the body, weeping and wailing, and attired in funeral garb; the immediate relatives, too, come and condole with the afflicted family. In some parts it is customary for the friends and intimate acquaintances of the deceased, who have been notified of his death, to bring pieces of white cloth or silk to place over the dead body. We ourselves once received a notification of this nature from the general in command of the Tartar troops at the port where we were residing in Central China, but as his mother died at Moukden, in Manchuria, we were unable to take any part in her funeral obsequies.

If the family be settled in any part away from the neighbourhood of their ancestral burying place, it becomes necessary for them to seek out a lucky spot for the burial of their deceased relative. In many cases the coffin is kept for years in the room where the ancestral tablets are, and sometimes it is temporarily laid in a sort of dead-house, hired or constructed for the occasion, until it can be transported to the original sepulchre of the family, or until a lucky spot can be discovered. The Chinese are very superstitious on this point, and even in times of epidemic will often insist on retaining coffins in their houses, and, as far as we are aware, there is no sanitary or other authority to interfere

and protect the health of the community. Many will, doubtless, say that all danger on this score is sufficiently obviated by the care with which most coffins are prepared; but the evidence of our senses, in a cholera season at Peking, has taught us that the contrary is frequently the case. Families at the very bottom of the social scale, for economy's sake, often inter their deceased relations within a few days of their death, but this practice is much looked down upon, and is considered a proof of the parties being sunk in the lowest depths of penury, as well as wanting in due respect to the departed. Professors of the art of Fêng-shui (literally wind and water), or geomancy, are consulted on the subject of a lucky place for sepulture. In Central and Southern China the summits and sloping sides of uncultivated hills are the most favourite spots, especially if near water, and with a south aspect. Coffins are also buried in fields, more particularly in the north, and, if our memory serves us, we have seen more than one large cemetery filled with low graves, and surrounded by dwarf mud fences, in the flat country outside the walls of Peking. Again to the west of Chinkiang—once a flourishing city on the bank of the river Yang-tsze, at the entrance to the southern portion of the Grand Canal—we have rambled over hills, where the graves are as thick as they well can be; many of these, in shape very much like a horse-shoe, are even now still well kept, and carefully tended by pious relatives of the departed, although the town itself is sadly fallen from the position it enjoyed before the rebels held it, and levelled its prosperous suburbs with the ground. Rich families often spend large sums of money over their burial-places, adorning them with life-size figures of various animals in marble, but the remains of friendless and poor strangers are deposited in any waste and vacant piece of ground with merely a slip of wood to mark the spot. All classes in the country, however, do their very best to have as showy a place of sepulture for their dead as they possibly can, and to obtain this end they are willing to make great sacrifices.

Soon after the death, the eldest son of the deceased, supported by friends, proceeds with two copper "cash,"\* and an earthenware bowl or vessel to the city moat or a neighbouring stream or well to "buy water" (mai shui) to wash the corpse with. In "buying the water" the coins are simply

thrown into the well or stream, and this ceremony can only be properly performed by the eldest son, or, in default of his presence at the obsequies, by his son, rather than by a younger son of the deceased; if there be no children or grandchildren, then the duty devolves on cousins, who succeed to all property. When the face and body have been washed, the corpse is dressed in the best clothes the family can procure, often in four or five suits, and put into its coffin, which is commonly placed on trestles. It now lies in state for a time, and a wooden tablet is set up bearing the name of the deceased, and his descendants prostrate themselves before it every day during the first seven days of mourning. A similar inscription to that on this tablet is afterwards erected at the grave, and is generally carved on stone, though the poor use wood.

In the case of poor families the sons frequently go round to their relatives and friends to collect money to defray the expenses attending a funeral, and they are generally successful, as the superstitious Chinese are much afraid of incurring the ill-will of the spirit of the departed.

On the day of interment, usually three weeks after the death, a meal is set out near the coffin, for the deceased's spirit to partake of. Then the mourners, first the men, and afterwards the women, holding sticks of incense in their hands, kneel down before the corpse, and bow their heads to the ground. They are all clothed in mourning attire, and wear white bandages round their heads. After this the funeral procession takes place, and the order is somewhat as follows. First come lanterns and musicians, occasionally playing a funeral dirge, then the ancestral tablet of the deceased, carried in a sedan-chair, next a man scattering "paper or mock money" to propitiate the spirits of the invisible world, behind him are relations and friends, then the coffin, followed by the sons and grandsons, weeping and attired in mourning, and in their rear come the women of the family in sedan-chairs, wailing and crying piteously. Last of all are persons bearing the oblations that have to be made at the grave. If the deceased has held any official position, other tablets, besides the one above mentioned, are to be seen carried in the procession, setting forth his titles and dignities.

When all have arrived at the grave, which is deep, if the nature of the ground will admit of it, the coffin is consigned to its last resting-place, crackers are let off, and prayers offered up; next pieces of

\* "Cash" is the name given by foreigners to the only native coin in use in China.

paper, supposed to represent clothes, money, and other things which the deceased's spirit may require in the world of shadows, are solemnly burned. At the time of burial, when the coffin is lowered into the grave, the sons, or whoever may be the chief mourners, at once sprinkle some earth over it, and the grave is filled up. The coffin of a father is deposited on the left side of the grave, being the place of honour, and the space on the right side is left for the mother. The ancestral tablet is brought home from the funeral in the sedan-chair, and various articles of food are placed before it; those present again make prostrations, and by strict custom the same ceremonies ought to be repeated for seven weeks. At the conclusion of the funeral rites, it is usual for the mourners to partake of an entertainment, from which it is reasonable for us to suppose that their grief is commonly of such a nature as to be easily comforted, and that the donning of the "garb of woe" is as much (if not more) a matter of form and usage with the children of the Flowery Land as it frequently is with us "Outside Barbarians."

The full term of mourning for parents is nominally three years, but practically twenty-seven months, and for the first month after their decease the mourners are not allowed to shave their heads; they consequently soon assume a wild and unkempt appearance. The very strict place offerings of food, &c., twice a year at their parents' graves, but our own experience goes to show that the customs of the Chinese in this respect are, occasionally at any rate, more exact in theory than in practice. Some five or six years ago we knew an educated Chinaman, who would discourse at great length on filial piety and such-like virtues, but who nevertheless confessed to us that he had not been to visit his mother's grave for ten years, although she was buried at a place only fifteen miles distant from where he had been living for a long period.

Etiquette requires that a widow should mourn the death of her husband for three whole years, and even after that period she is somewhat restricted in her choice of colours, red being forbidden her. Should a widow marry again, which is not very frequently the case, for the practice is looked down upon, she, of course, divests herself of all marks and symbols of woe and mourning. Men, however, are not expected to be quite so self-denying and particular in mourning the death of their wives, for they sometimes marry again be-

fore they have been widowers for a full year. Should a man's wife be unlucky enough to present him with a "pledge of affection" during the term of mourning for his parent, it is looked upon as highly improper and disrespectful to the deceased.

When an emperor dies all officials go into mourning, and remove the buttons and tassels from their hats; they are also required to perform certain ceremonies in the temples; and they cease, for the time being, to use vermilion paste for their seals of office, employing blue instead. Proclamations are issued by the local authorities all over the empire, by which the common people are called upon to let their hair grow for a hundred days; marriages are not allowed to take place, but practically they are winked at, if shorn of all the usual pomp and ceremony. The theatres, too, are closed for a long period, at any rate in Peking and its vicinity, though after a time this order is not insisted on at a distance from the capital.

## A SICILIAN STORY.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER V. RANSOMED.

It was the afternoon of the day fixed for Pasquale's deliverance. The glaring sun poured into the Osteria del Pellicano so fiercely that it seemed as if it would burn a hole wherever it shone. The osteria was filled with the usual company of peasants, buffalo-drivers, and stone-cutters, who assemble in such places for their mid-day meal and the siesta after it. It had the low ceiling common to such localities, and the usual foul atmosphere impregnated with stale tobacco, sour wine, and greasy soup.

Outside, stretched lazily on the ground, a group of boys who had already dined were playing at their national game, "morra." Their brown faces were all a-glow, and their black eyes gleamed, and their white teeth flashed as they called out the numbers, "uno," "quattro," "tre," "cinque," with hands held out, fingers thrown up, jerking out their words with a dissonant regularity.

Into this osteria entered, about five o'clock, a man rather better dressed than the other guests, and looking infinitely better fed. He called for some macaroni, and looked about him. Two of the men already present, and who were seated in the darkest corner of the room, nudged each other, and then one of them lounged up to the table occupied by the new comer. He looked up.



"Scusi," said the other with more courtesy than could have been expected from his ragamuffin exterior, and leaning over the table, with his back to the rest of the persons assembled, he raised his hand. In it was a paper. The man at the table tapped the breast-pocket of his coat. Then the other touched his belt and muttered:

"*Fac et spera.*" The sign of the cross was made in reply. After that the man who had left his seat returned to his companion; they paid for what they had eaten and walked out of the osteria. The boys stopped their game for a moment, and looking after them, muttered most unflattering epithets, and made the sign by which Italians think they avert the evil eye.

About a quarter of an hour afterwards the last comer rose, paid his bill, and went out in the same direction as the others. The boys again stopped their game and looked after him with that half-pitying, half-contemptuous expression with which a fat fly is seen blundering into a hungry spider's web. They shrugged their shoulders and looked as if they washed their hands of all responsibility in the business, and then went on with their amusement.

About a quarter of a mile from the osteria, on the road towards Palmo, the three men met and spoke. The words were few, but pregnant with meaning.

"You have the ransom?"

"Yes."

"Here is the receipt."

They went on a few steps, passed some bushes which were massed together, below a bank which jutted out from the wall of hills to their right; there was a whistle, and then a scramble.

"Here is your man," and Pasquale was pushed towards the well-dressed stranger.

"Where am I?" said Pasquale, pulling down a bandage.

"Free!" said his deliverer, giving him his hand; "free, thanks to the good Siora Rosa of the Belfry Tower."

So much for the syndie's secret. The imprudence of divulging it was apparent at once. At the sound of that name, some unseen witness of the scene made an exclamation, which might have been surprise, joy, malignant triumph, or a mixture of both.

"Oh, Gasparo!" called out poor Pasquale, "is it true, am I actually free? really out of the power of those—gentlemen?"

Poor Pasquale looked a pitiable object. His teeth chattered, his white lips quivered, drops of perspiration were on his brow.

"Make haste—it is late."

"And dark—oh Heavens!"

As they spoke, a shot was fired above their heads, and high upon the hill they could hear a fine tenor voice singing gleefully Santa Lucia.

When the syndie had got Pasquale into his own room, he began to question him. Pasquale's usual garrulity had been terrified into silence. His mutilated hand had been the very least of his sufferings. He had been seized on his way home from Priola. He was knocked down, stunned, robbed of his earnings, and nearly stripped, then dragged along in an opposite direction from whence he came. At night he was thrust, bound head and foot, into a cave or covered ditch. He was starved, beaten, made to march, pricked on by bayonets; at night the refuse of their food was thrown to him. "Oh, they were wretches, more cruel than Turks and heathens, and yet said their aves and paternosters with the same regularity as good Christians." One day they told him they were going to send for his ransom, and cut off his finger. He expostulated with them when he heard the sum asked for him, a poor artisan, but they silenced him with blows, and told him they knew what they were about.

"Did you see any other prisoners?" asked the syndie.

"Yes, but I never slept two nights in the same place, so that I am rather confused about them. Once, for a few hours, I was thrown into a cave, where I found a poor fellow, with long grey beard and grey hair, chained to the ground."

"Who was he?"

"He would not tell me. He could not say how long he had been a prisoner, for days were like years in that hell, and with those devils. Agony and rage had brought on a brain fever, and he had been delirious mad for months. They had tortured him to reveal where his family was, but he had balked them of their wicked will; and swore he would continue to do so. He spoke of an 'infame,' who was their captain, and that morning, when they had last thrust him his filthy food, they had jeered at him, and told him his turn was coming."

"Who is leader of the band, and did you see him?"

"Satanello; and on the last day of all, a handsome, richly-dressed fellow began to ask me questions as to the inhabitants here. I mentioned the rich widow of the Belfry Tower, and said she came from Torre Mela, upon which he started and flushed scarlet."

"This becomes interesting," thought the syndic, and he cleared his throat with exultation. Pasquale saw that the syndic was deeply interested, and with the quick instinct of his countrymen, waxed eloquent, and gave a great many dramatic touches to his dialogue with the handsome brigand.

"He asked about the children, and if the girls were pretty; he had heard, he said, one Lucia was pretty; he had something strange and husky in his voice when he spoke. I told him I did not know them well, but I believe there was a pretty biondina among them, who was very, very delicate. He looked at me and then left me; God knows I could think of little else but myself, and cared little about his questions; I was thinking how I could kill myself before I was cut to pieces, when I was called before them and told my ransom was paid. Madonna! I reeled with joy; they blindfolded me, and tramp, tramp, tramp, dragged me up and down, till we came to an osteria; they thrust me into a cantina, and there I waited hours, and then more tramping. I was then told to stand still, and not to pull off my bandage for ten minutes. 'If you attempt to move it before the time agreed, you shall be stabbed to the heart.' They are men of their word," added Pasquale, with grim humour, "and so I obeyed. I suddenly heard a cry like a civetta (owl), I pulled down my bandage, and, to my amazement, Gasparo stood before me."

"So far well," said the syndic, "but now, figlio mio, you have to do with me. Listen to me: if you utter one syllable of what you have just said to me, save in confession, I will send you back to Satanello."

"Santissima!"

"Above all, to Siora Rosa; you had best not see her."

"But I must thank her."

"Let me look at your finger, Pasquale," said the syndic, in a most irrelevant manner; "if that finger does not soon fester and inflame, I am a fool."

"Then my hand must be cut off. Dio buono!"

"Your hand, ass, your arm; perhaps even your life will not be saved."

Pasquale turned livid.

"Take my advice, go to bed, stay there for a week's riposo, my Teresa shall take you soup, and your wife must put linseed on your hand every two hours. Drink no wine and eat no meat, and you will pull through."

Pasquale was dismissed. The syndic

closed the door after him, and clapped his hands.

#### CHAPTER VI. LUCIA.

PASQUALE implicitly obeyed the syndic's orders. Rosa went to see him, but his wife told Rosa it was impossible to disturb him. He was feverish, and it would excite him too much to see his benefactress. The villagers knew now that it was Rosa's money which had liberated Pasquale, and the comments on her generosity were endless. "It was well to do it." "It was wrong to do it." "Where would it all end?" "The brigands would be down on her," &c.

The syndic had made up his plans. He was certain the handsome brigand was Rosa's husband. The soldiers he had sent for were daily arriving in twos and threes, disguised as vintagers. He gave orders that the belfry-house should be watched day and night. Ten days passed. Poor unconscious Rosa was vainly endeavouring to see Pasquale, and hastening her arrangements for departure. She had sold most of the furniture, but had reserved the plate. That and a good deal of money in actual coin were in the house, placed, according to the primitive custom of Italians, in sacks under her bed. The syndic had promised her an escort whenever she chose to go. He would have promised her a band of elephants if she had asked for them. He was so docile to her least wish, that she thought him as kind as her friend the priest at Torre Mela.

The syndic was rather glad her preparations for departure were known throughout Leonforte, as by that means the news would reach the ears he hoped would listen to them. He anticipated that the husband would be sure to seek the wife before she left. His men were all placed. Once or twice during these ten days Rosa had been roused in her unquiet sleep by the sound of a stealthy step among the bushes towards Valle Nera. She would jump up and look out, but nothing could be seen.

One evening, as she stood on the platform looking down the Valle Nera, her eye noticed something glittering on the ground. With a perfect spasm of the heart she recognised, as she picked it up, a medal of Lucia's. Maso had taken it off her neck after her death and worn it round his own. Rosa looked and looked, but there were certain little marks on it which identified it. Each brought a memory and a pang. This little notch had been made by the darling's tiny teeth, when she had

bitten it in a paroxysm of infantine anger; this was from a fall when she first tried her tottering little feet; this by Rosa's knitting needle, as the child had sprung from her father's knee to hers. Each little event was registered in the calendar of a mother's love. How had it fallen there? It was unaccountable.

That night Rosa could not sleep. Diomira was beside her. She looked at her. The girl was the very image of Lucia, and round the slender neck was a medal, the fac-simile of the one Rosa held in her hand, Lucia's. Rosa shuddered. Was Maso alive and near her? or was he dead? and had his murderers dropped it as a warning or threat?

While these thoughts kept her awake, she heard a sound outside. She listened, after an interval it was repeated. She rose noiselessly and looked out. All was still. The moon was bright, and the white splendour of the milky-way gave a soft lucidity to the sky. As she looked out from the back window towards Rocca Nera, she thought she heard a gasp or groan. She waited, heard nothing more, and returned to bed. Her heart beat as if it would suffocate her, and she was conscious of an inexplicable but terrible sense of expectation. The agitation in her mind seemed to penetrate through Diomira's, for in a few minutes she too was awake.

"What is the matter, Diomira?"

"I have been dreaming; I am so frightened. I thought I heard father's voice. It is so warm to-night. I must get up. I must breathe the air."

She rose, lit the lamp, went to the window and looked out. She had nothing on but her white night-dress; her long, fair hair hung round her throat and veiled her shoulders. She looked pale in the moonlight as she bent over; she must have been distinctly visible below.

Rosa had risen with her, and stood beside her.

"Now, darling, go back to bed, it is so late—ah! again—"

As she spoke something like a hoarse scream was heard from Valle Nera, then rapidly ascending steps, and a voice shouted out with an oath, "Call her." Suddenly a torch flared up, and threw its light on two men in a mortal struggle, while sharp, abrupt, cleaving the silent night, like a cry from another world, a terrible voice called out, "Lucia, Lucia!" It was the echo of that never-forgotten cry which was heard by Rosa at Torre Mela on the morning of Lucia's death.

It was answered by a discharge of guns. "My God!" sobbed Rosa, as she sank on her knees; "it is his voice—it is his spirit."

The next moment the great bell of the tower rung out like a tocsin. The terrified Diomira had flown to it, and was pulling it wildly. It overpowered every other sound. Then came shots, terrible imprecations, oaths, threats, and the platform, but now so solitary beneath the moonlight, was swarming with men in mortal combat. Soldiers were pursuing, and brigands flying down the rocks. Every now and then was heard a thud as a shot toppled a man over into the precipice. The bell still sounded on, and torches and lights were coming from the village. But they were too late. The syndic's ambuscade had been most successful. The brigands were flying, the soldiers victorious. He had won his prize!

The door of the house was burst open, and the syndic, followed by a score of villagers, entered. They rushed up-stairs. The children were all clinging to their mother, but she was still on her knees. She had never stirred since that awful voice called Lucia!

Daylight had dawned. The throng increased every minute.

"What was it?"

"The house had been attacked by brigands."

"Had they entered?"

"No, the spirit of Rosa's husband had appeared and given the alarm."

"The house had been alarmed and all were saved?"

"No," said the syndic, strutting about; "I was prepared for them. My men have watched this house ten days. Whoever captures Satanello, dead or alive—and I know he was among them"—glancing at Rosa—"will gain a thousand crowns. What is the day of the month?"

Ten minutes afterwards some soldiers were seen scrambling up towards the house, carrying what seemed a corpse. They laid their burden on the kitchen floor and went up-stairs to make their report to the syndic. He turned to Rosa.

"Go down," he said to her; "they want wine for the man; he is dying."

He followed her as she tottered down-stairs.

"Rosa!"

In a moment she was on her knees beside him.

The wasted features, the long grey hair, the emaciated form, could not disguise

from her who it was lying all but senseless at her feet. Yes, thanks to Heaven! once more, once more united, though in the very jaws of death, she and Maso were together!

"My love, my love, my love!" She could only ejaculate these words as she held him to her breast with a rocking motion, as if she held a child there.

"Who is that man?" asked Don Vincenzo Maderno.

"My husband!"

"Satanello! who would have thought," muttered the syndic, "that that excellent woman could so love a bandit, even if he is her husband."

"Satanello is Tonino Voghera," feebly murmured the dying man. "He took me prisoner on my way here; he has kept me and tortured me ever since, because I would not—I would not——" his voice broke and his eyes closed.

"Maso, why did you not send for me?"

"No, no!" The negatives rose almost to a shriek as they were uttered with the passion of a dying man.

"But why did you not call me now?—you called Lucia; I thought it was your spirit; if I had thought it was you, I would have appeared. Tonino might have had all, if he had left me you."

"Lucia," he murmured, with tremulous lips. "I would have died rather than call you, as he wished me to do. I told you, I would never call you."

"Come, children, kiss him, my darlings, he is your father."

The boys crept up to him and then hid their faces on her shoulder. Diomira and Menica bent over him. The fast glazing eyes opened, once more Maso's face flushed a little as he looked at Diomira. A smile of almost womanly sweetness passed over the rugged features. "I called you, Lucia," he murmured, and with that loved name on his lips, he passed away, and Rosa held what had been, but was no longer, Maso, to her breast. She seemed transfigured. She closed the dear eyes herself. She smoothed the grey hair, she composed the attenuated limbs; she was again, as by a miracle, her calm placid self. The doubts, the hopes, the fears were over. He was dead; but she had seen him once more, and the ineffable grace of reunion had robbed Death of his sting.

"But Satanello!" said the syndic. He could wait no longer, he tried to descend

the ravine after his men. The shots were getting fainter and fainter. Presently they ceased and a horn was sounded. After a pause the soldiers were seen returning with a prisoner. It was Satanello, alias Tonino. Short shrift was given him. He was shot before noon. He confessed before his death that he had captured Maso two days after he had left Torre Mela. Maso's rage had brought on brain fever, which had ended in temporary insanity. Tonino had then left the band on business connected with a Bourbon reactionary plot, and had only returned after Pasquale had been taken. When he heard that Rosa was at the Belfry Tower, he resolved on taking it by a coup de main. He had never heard of Lucia's death, for Maso had maintained, in spite of barbarous tortures, absolute silence. He resolved at last to take Maso with him to the Belfry Tower, so that the sight of the home which held his wife and children might vanquish him, and that in his yearning weakness he would call upon Rosa to open to him; but Maso was not to be betrayed. The resemblance of Diomira to Lucia only forced out that terrible cry from his lips, and Rosa had been effectually deceived.

It was Tonino who had thrown down the medal. He had torn it off Maso's neck. He knew it was Lucia's, and thought Maso wore it as a charm. If Lucia found it, he felt she would understand he was near, and perhaps she would herself open to him.

The syndic received the money for Satanello's capture. He paid Pasquale's debt to Rosa with part of it. He put into the next lottery, chose the number of the day of the month, that of Tonino's age and birth, and the mystic numbers which correspond to sudden death—and he lost his stake!

Rosa left the Belfry Tower and returned to Torre Mela. She never forgave the syndic his ambushade. If the soldiers had not been there, Maso might have escaped. Alas! does not all human hope depend on an "if." She recovered her beauty. Her white hair—it was white as snow from the day Maso died—made an argent aureole to a face which sorrow, nobly borne, had sublimed into saintliness. She had many offers of marriage, but refused them all. Her dead Maso was her first, her last love. Had he not died to save her and her children from plunder and death?

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